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LETTER DATED 9 MAY 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey to you the attached letter, dated 9 May 1997, which I have received from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations (see annex). Attached to the letter is the third bi-weekly report on the multinational protection force for Albania requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997.

I should appreciate your bringing the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

Annex

Letter dated 9 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit the third report on the multinational protection force for Albania (see appendix). The report is submitted pursuant to the requirement set out in paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997, in which the Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports, at least every two weeks, through the Secretary-General, to the Council. The second such report was conveyed to you on 25 April (S/1997/335, annex).

I should be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter and the third report circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) F. Paolo FULCI
Ambassador

Appendix

Third report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 28 March 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1101 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the offer made by certain Member States to establish a temporary and limited multinational protection force to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance.

2. In paragraph 9 of the resolution the Security Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports, at least every two weeks, through the Secretary-General to the Council. The first report was provided on 9 April 1997 (S/1997/296, annex) specifying, inter alia, the parameters and modalities of the operation on the basis of consultations between Member States participating in the force and the Government of Albania; the second report was provided on 25 April 1997 (S/1997/335, annex). The third report refers to events between 23 April and 7 May 1997.

II. MULTINATIONAL PROTECTION FORCE

Political guidance

3. The Steering Committee, consisting of the political directors of the troop-contributing countries and the Commander of the operation, continues to follow the overall situation on the ground and the full compliance of the activities of the force with the Security Council mandate. It meets on a weekly basis. Up to now it has had meetings on 4, 9, 14, 23 and 30 April and 6 May.

4. Slovenia, having formally decided to contribute to the force with a medical unit (27 men), joined the Steering Committee as of its meeting of 30 April.

5. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Belgium joined the Committee as observers.

6. The United Nations is represented by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs while representatives of both the Presidency and Commission of the European Union are present. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Western European Union (WEU) are represented by their respective presidents. A representative of Albania is regularly invited to attend the meetings.

Cooperation with Albanian authorities

7. The Albanian Ambassador to Rome attended the meeting of the Steering Committee on 10 April. He confirmed the full support of the Government of Albania for the multinational protection force operation and expressed appreciation for the humanitarian activities in the security framework provided by the force. This position was reiterated to the Minister of Defence of Greece who visited Albania on 28 April.

8. The Steering Committee intends to maintain constant contacts with the Albanian authorities, in particular the central commission established to serve as the interdepartmental point of coordination and contact in Tirana. The commission is headed by the Secretary of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pavli Zeri, whom the Steering Committee has invited to attend its next meeting.

Cooperation with international organizations

9. In compliance with the mandate described in resolution 1101 (1997), the humanitarian assistance programme for Albania has been largely implemented in a secure environment to which the force contributes. The force has already provided direct support to such international organizations as the World Food Programme (WFP) and EU/ECHO. The force ensures security on the roads used by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for food deliveries in the north of Albania. Additional activities in the same direction are planned between the force and WFP. Several non-governmental organizations have made inquiries about possible support from the force. Special procedures have been established by the Steering Committee for this purpose.

10. OSCE has established a presence in Tirana and Ambassador Grubmayr, Resident Deputy of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Albania, has taken up his functions.

11. The European Union/PHARE programme for Albania is about to be activated while UNICEF and WFP are providing emergency assistance to Albania. ICRC activities are continuing safely, as are those of some non-governmental organizations.

12. Following the fact-finding mission that visited Albania from 23 to 25 April, WEU defined a mandate for a European advisory, training and support programme for the Albanian police. OSCE and the European Union are actively considering the possibility of supporting this programme, the latter in the framework of a joint action on which initial discussion by the European Union took place at the Ministerial Council in Luxembourg on 29 April.

13. On 5 May, WHO and UNICEF launched polio vaccination campaigns throughout the country.

Force deployment

14. The deployment of the force and the achievement of its planned tasks is progressing well within the scheduled time. The control by sea and air of the

key entry points in the country is now fully achieved. The force deployment has substantially improved the security conditions for aid deliveries. The force is strengthening its military organization and progressively expanding the framework of security into the country, gaining control of the main roads and communications in the application of its mandate. As of 7 May, the deployment of the force reached a level of 6,345 units, 98 per cent of the total envisaged.

15. The current deployment is as follows: Austria, 116; Denmark, 11; France, 923; Greece, 803; Italy, 2,973; Romania, 399; Spain, 341; and Turkey, 779. The arrival of the Romanian contingent took place on 4 May. The Danish contingent completed deployment on 7 May.

Summary of operations

16. The force is consolidating its presence in the planned sites of deployment. Security has been provided for several humanitarian convoys. Surveillance, patrolling and security have been assured on many itineraries. Air, naval and telecommunications activities have proceeded according to scheduled plans.

17. Civilian-military cooperation is developing, in particular through the specific branch of the force created for this purpose. Local representatives of the main international organizations active in Albania (including UNICEF, WFP, EU/ECHO and ICRC) took part in a security and logistic support briefing on 30 April. Reconnaissance by the force was carried out at the site of Qafe Shtama/Burrel following the explosion of a munitions depot that caused the death of 22 Albanian civilians.

18. Assistance and protection for official visits has been provided by the force. Special procedures for this purpose are being defined.

III. CONCLUSIONS

19. Force deployment is almost complete and has had a positive effect on the overall security situation in Albania. Commercial and industrial activities are resuming as well as maritime connections. Schools have reopened. Sports and social activities are returning to normal. Curfew has been reduced. However, isolated clashes are still recorded. One clash involving the force took place in Vlore on 4 May. Two rival bands opened fire near an Italian camp. The force fired warning shots. No one was injured and there was no substantial damage. Organized crime and racketeering are still continuing in certain areas where police control remains insufficient.